Afghan Mercenaries along the Line of Control

3577. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan has started losing its grip on the local Kashmiri population in fomenting insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, whether Pakistan has attempted to replace that influence by locating Afghan and other foreign mercenaries along the Line of Control (LoC); and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Pakistan is relying in ever greater measure on foreign terrorists in its pursuit of cross border terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Bulk of the foreign militants infiltrating into Jammu & Kashmir, at present, are of Pakistani origin. There are also a few Afghan and Arab nationals. Since the military coup in October 1999, Pakistan has been enhancing its State sponsorship of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India.

Cross Border Terrorism

3578. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that India is a major victim of the cross border terrorism;

(b) have any study been made in the past in this regard and any action taken on that basis; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government on international front to curb this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. Government are very much aware of the fact that India is a major victim of cross border terrorism for the past two decades. Tackling the phenomena of cross border torrorism is a major priority of Government of India and all ways and means are being explored including on the international arena where India has been at the forefront in shaping international consensus on the need to eliminate terrorism. As part of this intiative, India has tabled a draft Comprehensive Convention on